



# FACT SHEET

## BICYCLE SAFETY

Bureau of Health  
Division of Community Health  
Maine Injury Prevention Program (MIPP)

1-800-698-3624

or

(207) 287-5356

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### What Does the MIPP Offer?

> Education, information, and resource materials on a variety of youth injury prevention topics.

> Technical assistance to local programs and communities to address prevention to Maine's children and family injuries.

> Grants to community agencies to prevent injuries, suicide and violence.

> Training and education to increase the knowledge and skills of individuals and agencies working with children, families and caregivers to prevent injuries.

> Surveillance of injury morbidity and mortality to monitor the incidence of injuries among Maine's children and families.

Revised 10/99

### Is there a problem here in Maine?

- According to the Maine Department of Transportation, 267 vehicle related bicycle crashes occurred in 1999, with one fatality, and 245 injuries. In the period of 1995 – 1999, an average of 314 crashes occurred annually averaging 1.4 fatalities a year. The estimated cost of these fatalities and injuries to society in Maine represents \$16,660,000.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 10-15 year olds are twice as likely to be injured on a bicycle than any other age group.
- According to NHTSA, male youth are four times more likely to be fatally injured in a motor vehicle related bicycle crash than females.
- According to NHTSA, about one-third bicycle fatalities occur on weekends.
- Head injuries are the most serious type of injury and the most common cause of death for bicyclists.
- Properly worn helmets have been shown to reduce the risk of head injury by 85% and brain injury by 88%.

### Is there a law here in Maine?

The Bicycle Safety Education Act requires that *all* youth to age sixteen, be *properly* secured with a helmet when driving on public roads and bikeways.

### Who is at Risk?

According to the 1999 Maine Youth Risk Behavior Survey, (YRBS – Grades 7 – 12), about one-third of middle school students and 15% high school students reported wearing bicycle helmets when riding. National data, shows that only 12% of high school students use helmets when riding.

### What can we do?

#### **Practice these Safe Rules of the Road:**

1. Walk bikes to the street before getting on them.
2. Look *left-right-left* when entering the road or crossing an intersection.
3. Ride in single file on the right, with traffic, not against it.
4. Yield to Pedestrians.
5. Obey traffic signs, signals, and pavement markings.
6. Avoid riding at night. If you must drive at night, use head and taillights, reflectors are not enough.
7. Wear bright colored clothing for better visibility.
8. Wear a *properly* fitted helmet and wear it every ride.
9. Keep your bike in good repair.